

The Liberty Bell as a Symbol for Civil Rights

Grade Levels: 9-12

Lesson 2

(Expected Class Sessions to Complete: 2-3)

Essential Questions:

1. What does the Liberty Bell represent to activists in the Civil Rights movement of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender (GLBT)?
2. On what other groups' experiences with the Liberty Bell as a symbol do Civil Rights activists draw?
3. Is the Liberty Bell successful in helping the Civil Rights activists meet their goals?
4. Compare and contrast the fight of the Women's Suffrage Movement of the 1900s to the ongoing fight of the gays and lesbians for equality in marriage (Project 1138).

Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify and explain the connection between the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall and the GLBT Civil Rights Movement.
- Students will examine and analyze photographs and a historical marker to identify and research the key people involved in the movement and exemplify their understanding of how the Liberty Bell has been used as a symbol by various groups, particularly by young activists during the Civil Rights era.

Standards Correlation :

Reading Information Text RI 5.1, RI 5.2, RI 5.3, RI 5.7, Writing W 5.2, W 5.4, Reading History RH (6-8).1, RH (6-8).2, RH (6-8).7

Materials:

- Brief summary of the Liberty Bell's history found at www.nps.gov/inde/liberty-bell-center.htm
- Background of the Equality Movement found at <http://www.gaypioneers.com/>
- Photograph of march in front of Independence Hall (Attached & www.gaypioneers.com/)
- Primary Source Document Analysis for Photographs (Attached & Available at www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/photo_analysis_worksheet.pdf)
- Rubric for Biography & Essential Questions

Introduction (Before the Lesson):

1. It is very important that the teaching approach of this lesson is understood through the introduction of the essential questions. Post them on chart paper and tell the students that the goal of this lesson is to be able to answer the questions at a level of proficiency.
2. It would be helpful to give some background knowledge on the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Movement. Play the short video of GLBT History Month found at www.equalityforum.com.
3. Tell the students that they will be choosing a person from last year's GLBT History month and researching and writing a biography and a presentation on their important person.

Engage/Procedure:

Whole Class Discussion:

1. Pass out the Primary Source analysis handout found at the end of this lesson. Review the worksheet with the students.
2. Show the photo of the Civil Rights demonstration for gay equality (www.gaypioneers.com) and found at end of lesson.
3. Ask students to determine the era based on visual cues (e.g. clothing, hair styles, and location of the Liberty Bell in Independence Hall). Have students predict why these people are marching.
4. Then have students fill out their analysis sheets.
5. Explain that the students were participants in the march in search of equal rights for gays and lesbians in front of Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell.
6. Ask the students why they would choose a place like this for their march.
7. Begin to ask for input on answering the essential questions.

Individual Work:

1. Students will read the brief history of the Liberty Bell found at www.nps.gov/inde/liberty-bell-center.htm and review the biographies found on the www.equalityforum.com website and choose their biographical topic.
2. Students will need research time at home or on the computer.

Cooperative Work:

1. Students will share research in small groups and add to essential questions by posting sticky notes on the essential question chart paper.
2. Students should brainstorm the answer to the question, “Why would this group choose the Liberty Bell as a symbol for their movement?”
3. Also, “How is this current movement similar to the Suffrage Movement in the 1900s and how is it different? Do you think the outcome will be the same over time?”

Close:

Whole Class Discussion:

Have students share the ideas generated during their brainstorming session. Elicit or present the following responses:

- a. Inscription on the Liberty Bell reads, “*proclaims Liberty thro’ all the Land and to all the Inhabitants thereof*”; currently the GLBT community is fighting for equal rights in marriage.
- b. The Liberty Bell has been used by various groups seeking rights including abolitionists and women’s suffrage activists. Similar to the Civil Rights movement, abolitionists sought freedom for African-Americans, and suffragists sought to extend voting rights to women and others.
- c. The Liberty Bell is a well-known site; a march there would garner media attention.
- d. The Liberty Bell is a national symbol; it is associated with the federal government which is the level of government which the activists were seeking to influence. They are trying to achieve equal rights in marriage privileges that gay couples are denied under federal law.

Individual Work:

- Students will continue to research both the essential questions and their selected subject for the biography project.
- Students will create a poster or tri-fold project that visually addresses the key achievements of the subject.
- (See rubric)
- **Students add to the essential questions and answer the questions for an essay assessment.**

Post Visit-Extension/Assessment:

Cooperative Work: Compare and Contrast:

- In groups students will create a compare and contrast of the Women's Suffrage Movement and the current movement of the GLBT group. You may use a T-Chart or a Venn Diagram for this activity.
- *Guide the students to make the following connections:
- The women in the Suffrage Movement went to the states to earn voting rights at the state level prior to the passing of the 19th Amendment. Are the GLBT groups proceeding the same way?
- The women in the Suffrage Movement supported and helped to influence the Amendments to grant suffrage to African Americans. Is the GLBT aligned with any other groups?
- What is the progress of the GLBT?

Additional Extension:

Whole Class Discussion:

1. Tell the students that many groups have more than one symbol for liberty. The GLBT has the rainbow flag.
2. Have students create a flag that exemplifies themselves or their class.

Activity Worksheets:

Primary Source Analysis Sheet: Photographs

Primary Sources:

Seminal demonstration July 4, 1965 Gay Photograph



GLBT

Biography & Social Studies Rubric

Title: _____

Social Studies:

	Possible Points	Points Awarded	Comments
Historical Background: What was life like for people in this community during their lifetime?	10		
Personal Background: What was your figure's life like during this time? Details of his or her life.	10		
Significant Events: What were some events in the life of your figure that were significant in history during this time period and beyond?	10		
Impact: What impact did your person have on the civil rights movement?	10		
More Interesting Details: Describe other additional achievements of your figure's life	5		
Opinion/Conclusion: What is your opinion on your figures contribution to our lives today?	5		
References: All information is referenced correctly and sourced on a reference page.	5		

ILA Rubric

- 5 – The student demonstrates desired skills throughout text.
- 4 – Most of the time, the student demonstrates desired skills in text.
- 3 – Occasionally, the student demonstrates desired skills in text.
- 2 – Seldom does the student demonstrate desired skills in text.
- 1 – The student is no using the desired skills in text.

___ Writing Conventions: The writer has taken time and effort to ensure biography does not have spelling errors. Each sentence begins with capital and ends with the correct punctuation. The biography presents no mechanical errors. The biography is ready to publish.

___ Use of Language: The writer uses vivid words with attention to detail and description, such as: similes, metaphors, and adjectives. The language in the biography is natural and interesting, but not overdone.

___ Organization: The biography is organized in a clear manner. It paints a clear portrait and includes clear organizational structure with sound paragraphs and transitions. The biography begins with a title.

Photograph Primary Source



Seminal Demonstration, July 4, 1965
From the collections of the Equality Forum